



THE ANNUAL REPORT  
for the Year 1948 of  
The Medical Officer of Health  
to the Depwade Rural District Council.

High Common,  
Wymondham.

August, 1949.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report for the year 1948. The report is made according to the instructions of the Ministry of Health. The vital statistics of the District are given below together with appropriate observations.

The Registrar General estimates the population of your District at the 31st December, 1948, to be 17,710. This shows an increase of population of 870 during the year 1948. During the same period the natural increase by births over deaths was only 91 in your District, so that we have to take note of the interesting fact that some 779 people were attracted into the District for one reason or another during 1948.

The Live Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated population during the year was 17.39, which is 1.72 per 1000 less than the figure for 1947, but is almost the same as the average figure for England and Wales. The Post-war boom in babies appears to be on the decline on a national as well as a local scale. The percentage of illegitimate births was 5.2 of all live births in the District.

The Still Birth Rate per 1,000 total births was 34.48, which is almost the same as the previous year and is less than that of the Country as a whole.

The Death Rate in your District during the year was 12.25 per 1,000 of the population and this shows a decrease of 2.95 per 1,000 over the figure for 1947, but the rate for Depwade is still slightly higher than that of England and Wales. 55% of the total deaths were due to disease specifically associated with old age. The number of deaths from cancer has risen from 26 in 1947 to 41 in 1948.

The Mortality rate in infants under one year was:-

Legitimate 22.4 and Illegitimate 3.25 per 1,000 live births. These figures are considerably less than the national average.

There were no deaths of mothers as a result of child birth during 1948, which is highly satisfactory. Out of 6 premature births 2 babies died.

Three persons died as a result of Tuberculosis in 1948. This is the same number of deaths as in 1947. Four new cases of Pulmonary and 10 new cases of Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis were added to the Register of cases in your District during the year under review. After making deductions for deaths and recoveries of patients the balance left on the Register at the end of the year was 108, which is an increase of 6 over the previous year. There is a gradual, though not a serious rise, in the incidence of Tuberculosis in the District. Nearly half the cases are of the non-pulmonary type which is known to originate chiefly from infected milk so that the introduction of general pasteurisation is definitely indicated to remove this source of infection.

There was no serious outbreak of infectious disease during the year. Measles and whooping cough continue to form the greater number of infectious cases notified. There was a fair incidence of measles during the first two quarters of the year but this dropped dramatically at the end of June. Whooping cough lingered on through the first nine months of the year though not in high numbers, and fell away in the last quarter. There were two cases of Diphtheria both in unimmunised persons, but these fortunately recovered. Scarlet fever was troublesome in small outbreaks here and there in the District chiefly among school children, but the routine swabbing of contacts and the exclusion of carriers of the disease from schools rapidly extinguished these outbreaks. Jaundice of the infective type continues to be endemic in the area although the numbers are small. It is interesting to note that female cases outnumber males by over two to one during the period. Not a single case of Infantile Paralysis was notified in your District for which we must be thankful.

The area of your District is 79.742 acres.

The population (Registrar General's Estimate) at the end of 1948 was 17,710.

Number of inhabited houses, 1931 Census - 5,087. Year 1948 - 5743

Rateable Value £49418

Product of Penny Rate £209. approx.

### Vital Statistics for 1948.

#### Births and Deaths

<u>Live Births.</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	143	149	292
Illegitimate	8	8	16
	<u>151</u>	<u>157</u>	<u>308</u>

Live Birth Rate per 1,000 of the Estimated Population - 17.39.

#### Still Births.

Legitimate	3	7	10
Illegitimate	1	0	1
	<u>4</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>11</u>

Still Birth Rate per 1,000 total births - 34.48

#### Deaths

The total deaths for the year were 217, which gives a Death Rate per 1,000 of 12.25.

#### Deaths of Infants under one year.

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	3	4	7
Illegitimate	0	1	1
	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>8</u>

Deaths of Infants under one year per 1,000 live births:-

Legitimate - 22.4      Illegitimate - 3.25

The following table gives a comparison of the Live Birth rate of Depwade R.D. and England and Wales for the past five years:-

<u>Year.</u>	<u>Birth Rate /1000 Depwade.</u>	<u>Birth Rate /1000 Eng.&amp; Wales.</u>
1944	19.29	11.6
1945	17.02	16.1
1946	19.62	19.1
1947	19.11	21
1948	17.39	17.9

(3)

The following table gives the causes of deaths in 1948:-

<u>Cause of Death</u>	<u>Total (all ages)</u>
Cerebrospinal Meningitis	1
Tuberculosis (Respiratory)	2
" (other forms)	1
Syphilitic Diseases	1
Cancer	41
Cerebral Haemorrhage	27
Heart Diseases	81
Other Disease of Circulation	12
Bronchitis	2
Pneumonia	5
Other Respiratory Diseases	4
Ulcer of Stomach or Duodenum	1
Diarrhoea under 2 years	1
Appendicitis	1
Other Digestive Diseases	3
Nephritis	3
Congenital causes at Birth	8
Suicide	3
Road Traffic Accidents	3
Other Violent Causes	5
All other causes	<u>12</u>
	<u>217</u>

#### Prevalence and Control of Infectious Diseases

During the year the following cases of infectious disease were notified:-

	<u>Totals.</u>		<u>Quarter ending 31.3.48</u>		<u>Quarter ending 30.6.48</u>		<u>Quarter ending 30.9.48</u>		<u>Quarter ending 31.12.48.</u>	
	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>
Scarlet Fever	15	22	2	8	3	4	2	1	8	9
Whooping Cough	66	75	17	22	29	24	17	28	3	1
Measles	135	140	74	72	56	62	5	6	-	-
Diphtheria	-	2	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-
Pneumonia	11	13	2	7	5	1	1	4	3	1
Erysipelas	2	4	-	1	1	-	-	1	1	2
Puerperal Pyrexia	-	5	-	3	-	-	-	2	-	-
Ophthalmia Neon	1	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Jaundice	8	18	1	2	-	7	3	6	4	3

#### Tuberculosis

Pulmonary	2	2	-	1	-	-	2	-	-	1
Non-Pulmonary	7	3	2	-	4	1	-	1	1	1

Ø Inward transfer from London C.C.

#### TUBERCULOSIS

Number of cases on Register December 31st, 1948:-

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Pulmonary	30	27	57
Non-Pulmonary	27	24	51
	<u>57</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>108</u>

Seven cases of Scarlet Fever, two cases of Diphtheria and one case of Measles were removed to Dereham Isolation Hospital.



All cases of Scarlet Fever and Diphtheria are investigated by the Sanitary Inspectors, and fumigation is carried out following removal or recovery. Fumigation is also carried out after removal of cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis.

No cases of food poisoning were notified in the District during 1948.

### SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT.

#### WATER SUPPLIES

The following table shows the number of samples taken from bore-holes and shallow wells with results indicated.

	<u>No. Taken.</u>	<u>No. Fit.</u>	<u>No. Unfit.</u>	<u>No. Doubtful.</u>
<u>Bore-Holes</u>				
For bacteriological examination	-	-	-	-
For chemical analysis	6	6	-	-
<u>Shallow wells etc.</u>				
For bacteriological examination.	4	-	2	2
For chemical analysis	13	4	5	4
TOTALS	23	10	7	6

There continues to be a drop in the water levels of the shallow wells throughout the District, and carting of water had to be resorted to in some of the Parishes.

Again, I would like to emphasize the potential danger to health of water derived from shallow wells. Only after careful consideration of the site and surroundings should new wells of this type be permitted and the provisions of the Buildings Bye-Laws regarding their construction must be rigidly enforced. It is hoped that by the carrying out of the Council's main water scheme the use of such wells will be reduced considerably in the next few years.

#### Piped Water Supplies

Five samples of water from existing main supplies were submitted for bacteriological examination and four reported fit and one doubtful. The doubtful sample was found to be due to a defect in the rising main in the bore at the Long Stratton Headworks and a subsequent sample taken after repair was found to be satisfactory.

During the year, the following new mains and extensions were carried out:-

Bressingham 4950 yards.      Fersfield 1383 yards.  
 Denton first stage 349 yards.  
 Morningthorpe, Fritton and Hompnall 4,015 yards.  
 Thelveton 1875 yards. Roydon-Tottington Lane 461 yards.

Total 7 miles 713 yards.

In addition to the above, council Housing Sites at Pulham Market, Bunwell and Fornsett (Airey houses) were provided with piped water from small bore-hole schemes.

The number of dwellings and approximate population being supplied from piped water is as follows:-

<u>Parish.</u>	<u>No. of Houses Direct to Houses.</u>	<u>By Standpipe.</u>	<u>Estimated Population.</u>
Harleston	369	72	1430
Long Stratton	135	21	520
Scole (inc. Thelveton)	147	-	490
Dickleburgh	72	-	250
Hempnall	66	16	280
Bressingham (incl. Fersfield)	68	-	230
Roydon	40	16	200
Morningthorpe	29	10	130
Bunwell	16	-	60
Pulham Market	20	-	70
Fornsett	-	6	20
Thorpe Abbotts	40	-	130
Tibenham	15	-	50
TOTALS	<u>1017</u>	<u>141</u>	<u>3860</u>

Approximately 21.8 per cent of the population of the District are now being supplied from piped water supplies, a creditable increase on the 11.83 per cent at the end of 1947.

#### DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

No major works in connection with sewerage or sewage disposal works were carried out during the year. Small schemes in connection with new Council Housing sites have been carried out at Roydon, Fornsett, Pulham Market, Dickleburgh, Scole and Bunwell.

Some progress has been made in the conversion of earth closets etc., to the Water Carriage system where sewers are available without resorting to Statutory action. In several other instances owners of property have put in modern drainage systems with approved septic tanks for indoor sanitation.

#### NIGHT-SOIL AND REFUSE COLLECTION.

From January 1st. 1948, the collection and disposal of house refuse and night-soil in the parish of Harleston was taken over by the Council by direct labour, a Dennis 10 cubic yard vehicle with movable night-soil tank being purchased for the work.

Night-soil collection is still confined to Harleston, but in April, the refuse collection service was extended to the parishes of Hempnall, Long Stratton, Pulham Market, Pulham St. Mary, Starston, Dickleburgh, Scole, Roydon and Bressingham - where just over 1200 houses in the built up parts of the parishes receive a fortnightly collection.

The refuse is disposed of by semi-controlled tipping at disused gravel pits in the parishes of Weybread, Scole, Roydon, Hempnall and Fornsett, and night-soil is disposed of in prepared pans on land at Harleston.

The service appears to be well organised and is carried out in a very satisfactory manner, complaints of irregular collections being almost eliminated.



In September, in accordance with a request from the Board of Trade for increased salvage of waste paper, a special collection was commenced from shops and such premises throughout the District, in addition to the waste paper collected during refuse collection from domestic premises. During the year a total of 18 tons of waste paper was collected and sold to the value of £113.

### HOUSING.

As in 1947, in accordance with the general policy of the Ministry of Health, action has been confined to dealing only with the most urgent cases under the Housing Act, 1936. During the year Demolition Orders were made in respect of six dwellings. Undertakings that cottages would not be used for human habitation have been accepted in five other cases. When complaints have been received regarding disrepair of houses, informal action has been taken to get essential work carried out and owners have, in the main, been co-operative and had the work done.

For various reasons little progress was made during the year with the Rural Housing Survey, and by the end of the year 2023 houses had been inspected and placed in various categories as follows:-

Category 1. Fit in all respects.	414	(approx. 20.5%)
" 2. Unfit, but requiring only minor repairs.	417	( " 20.5%)
" 3. Unfit, but requiring major repairs.	757	( " 37.5%)
" 5. Unfit, and incapable of being brought up to required housing standard.	435	( " 21.5%)

Note: Council houses have not been taken into account in the above figures.

During the year the Council have built a further 121 new houses making a total of 243 new permanent houses occupied by the end of 1948. In addition a further 57 dwellings were provided by conversions making a total of 81. A further 9 houses have been built by private enterprise.

### FACTORIES ACT. 1937.

The number of factories on the register at December 31st, 1948 was as follows:-

Factories using mechanical power	55
Factories without mechanical power	23
	<u>78</u>

During the year 48 inspections of these premises have been made and in 4 cases it was found that lime washing of the walls, etc., was required and in 3 cases repairs or cleansing was required to the sanitary conveniences. In each case the necessary work was carried out following informal action.

Only one case of out-work being carried out in a private house has been notified in the District, and conditions there are satisfactory.

### GENERAL PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTIONS.

The usual routine inspections of other premises controlled by the Public Health Act, and investigations into complaints of alleged nuisance from ditches, cesspools, etc. have been carried out, and in no case has other than informal action been necessary to remedy any nuisance found.

Work under the Rats & Mice (Destruction) Act, 1919, and Infestation Order 1943 has been carried out, under delegation from the Norfolk County Council, and premises found to be infested have been referred to the Pest Officer of the Norfolk A.E.C., for treatment on behalf of the Council.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.Unsound Food.

During the year a total of 5 cwts 2½ qtrs of various foodstuffs were condemned as unfit for human consumption at food shops in the District. Brief details:-

Imported Beef	105 lbs.	B con	69 lbs
English Beef & Offal.	39 "	V rious tinned meats	131 lbs.
English Pork.	170 "	Misc.tinned foods etc.	116 lbs.

MILK SUPPLIES

At the end of the year there were 449 persons registered in the District for the production and/or sale of milk - including 98 producer/retailers and four retailers who purchase milk by wholesale.

Of the above there are 40 producers of T.T. milk, 47 producers of Accredited Milk. There are also two licences in respect of the sale of Pasteurised milk, and one bottling Licence for T.T. milk.

I am pleased to report an increasing tendency for producers to turn over to the production of Accredited and/or Tuberculin tested milk, with the necessary improvements to cowsheds and dairy premises, and it is mainly in connection with these improvements that 175 inspections at these premises have been carried out during the year. No serious contravention of the Milk and Dairies Order has been found, and minor infringements have been corrected as a result of informal action.

MANUFACTURE AND SALE OF ICE-CREAM

As in 1947, only one premises was used for the manufacture and sale of ice-cream in the District, and two shops from which ice-cream (bought elsewhere) was sold. Frequent inspections of these premises have been made and the Food and Drugs Act, and the Ice-Cream (Heat Treatment) Regulations have been complied with.

Samples of Ice-cream submitted for bacteriological examination during the year gave the following results:-

Manufacturer	2 samples	both Grade IV
Shop (1) (Lyons)	1 "	Grade 1
Shop (2) (Walls)	1 "	Grade 1

Following the result of each sample the manufacturer was given specific advice regarding his methods of procedure, but owing to his inability to obtain the recording thermometer for the pasteurising plant it was difficult to ascertain if correct temperatures as laid down were being maintained during the process.

It should be noted that the Methylene Blue Test for the bacteriological examination of ice-cream is not regarded as entirely satisfactory, and no statutory standard as to cleanliness or quality of ice-cream has yet been laid down.

GENERAL FOOD PREMISES

Routine inspections continue to be made of butcher's shops, other food shops, and all other premises where food is prepared for sale to the public, and in general conditions have been found to be satisfactory.

In conclusion, may I express my thanks to the Council and it's staff for support and encouragement throughout the year.

W. W. SINCLAIR.

Medical Officer of Health.  
Depwade Rural District Council.

